

Florence, New Jersey
May 3, 2017

The Florence Township Council held a regular meeting on the above date in the Municipal Complex, 711 Broad Street, Florence, New Jersey.

The meeting was called to order by Council President Lovenduski at 8:00 PM. He asked everyone to remain standing for a moment of silence after the Salute to the Flag to honor Jack Ulmer. He was a long-standing citizen, school teacher in the community and involved in many other things. Council President Lovenduski led the Salute to the Flag.

The Opening Statement was read by the Acting Township Clerk: Notice was sent to the Trenton Times for information; posted on the municipal bulletin board; placed on the web-site on January 5th, 2017; and advertised in the Burlington Co. Times on January 8th, 2017.

Present: Frank Baldorossi, Paul Ostrander, Jerry Sandusky, David Woolston, Ted Lovenduski

Also present: Mayor Craig H. Wilkie; Richard A. Brook, Township Administrator; Thomas A. Sahol, Assistant Township Administrator, Kelly Grant, Esq., Township Attorney; Nancy L. Erlston, Acting Township Clerk

MINUTES

Baldorossi made a MOTION; seconded by Sandusky to approve the following minutes. Roll call vote – all ayes. Motion carried. Unanimous approval.

- Township Council Regular Session – April 5, 2017 and April 19, 2017
- Township Council Executive Session – April 12, 2017
- Township Council Closed Session – April 19, 2017

FINANCIAL CORRESPONDENCE

It was on the MOTION of Sandusky; seconded by Ostrander to approve the **Treasurer's Bill List**.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Baldorossi, Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Lovenduski

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried. Unanimous approval.

REGULAR CORRESPONDENCE

- A. Letter from Bordentown Sewerage Authority formally opposing the proposed pipeline project and compressor station in Chesterfield, NJ.
- B. Notification from NJ Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control regarding Social Affair Permit for Francis W. Robbins Post 194 for event on June 3, 2017.

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- C. Letter from Nothing But The Word Deliverance Church, Inc. requesting the use of Wilkie Park and Gazebo on Saturday, July 8, 2017 from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for a community outreach event.

Mayor Wilkie requested Acting Clerk Erlston send a letter to Nothing But the Word Deliverance Church asking them to choose a different day. The day they requested is the Annual Patriotic Day Celebration in the township. All were in agreement.

It was the Motion of Sandusky, seconded by Ostrander to receive and file Correspondence A and B and to send a response to Correspondence C. All ayes.

APPLICATIONS

- A. Off-Premise Merchandise Raffle – Florence HS Band Boosters
June 18, 2017, 5:00pm, Nyikita Field, Tenth & Hornberger Avenues

It was the Motion of Sandusky, seconded by Baldorossi to approve the application.

Upon roll call Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Baldorossi, Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Lovenduski

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Council President Lovenduski opened the meeting to the public at this time.

Fred Scheetz, 12 Church Street, asked if Nothing But the Word Deliverance Church had an event last year. Mayor Wilkie said they did but it was not the same day as the Patriotic Day Celebration. Mr. Scheetz said he believes it was around July 4th. There was alcohol and it was a mess. Mayor Wilkie said he wished that someone had mentioned it at that time. He will make sure to advise them that no alcohol is allowed and they need to clean up after the event.

It was the Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Woolston to close the public portion of the meeting. All ayes.

RESOLUTIONS

**RESOLUTION NO. 2017-103
Water & Sewer Payment Plan for
Block 16, Lot 7
76 West Front Street**

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RESOLUTION NO. 2017-104

**Approve Release of Water Distribution & Sanitary Sewer
Maintenance Bonds
NFI Real Estate, Phase I**

RESOLUTION NO. 2017-105

**Approve Request for Reduction of Performance Bond for
First Industrial Realty Trust, 400 Cedar Lane
Block 148.06, Lot 2**

RESOLUTION NO. 2017-106

**Resolution Providing for the Insertion of a Special
Item of Revenue in the Budget of the Township of Florence,
County of Burlington, Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87
Chapter 159, P.L. 1948**

RESOLUTION NO. 2017-107

**Approve the Public Display of Fireworks for
Florence Township's Patriotic Day Celebration Day**

RESOLUTION NO. 2017-108

**Authorize the Township Water & Sewer Engineer to
Prepare Specifications and Obtain Bids for the
Redevelopment of Well No. 5**

RESOLUTION NO. 2017-109

**Resolution Providing for the Insertion of a Special
Item of Revenue in the Budget of the Township of Florence,
County of Burlington, Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87
Chapter 159, P.L. 1948**

RESOLUTION NO. 2017-110

**Award Contract for the
2017 Road Resurfacing Project to
Richard T. Barrett Paving Company, Inc.
400 Prospect Street, Trenton, NJ 08618**

It was the Motion of Woolston and seconded by Sandusky to approve Resolution Nos. 2017-103 through 2017-110.

Upon roll call, Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Baldorossi, Ostrander, Sandusky, Woolston, Lovenduski

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Motion carried. Unanimous approval.

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ORDINANCES

None at this time.

REPORTS

Committees, Boards and Officers:

Councilman Sandusky said that on April 22 and April 23 many volunteers were at the Marconi Lodge site working on the community garden. There were Comcast employees, boy scouts and their leaders and parents. There were township employees there on their own time. The garden turned out very nice. He thanked everyone for the efforts. He was told that the stone and fence would be installed shortly.

Administration

Mayor

Mayor Wilkie said the work on the garden was a great day. He was also glad to be able to participate in the Opening Day for softball and baseball and the rededication of Olaff Field. It was a very nice program. He suggested going to the field to see the mural that was done honoring Colonel Olaff.

The Roebling Museum moved their car show from July to avoid the heat. It was held this past weekend. It was a nice day and he hoped it went well.

Tomorrow at 10am is the National Day of Prayer service at the Municipal Building. He encouraged people to attend if possible. He apologized that he would not be able to attend because of work obligations.

Saturday from 3pm-6pm the Education Foundation will be having a fundraiser at the Riverfront School field. It is dinner and dessert food trucks. It seems to be a growing trend to have food truck events. Friday, May 12, the township will be honoring the memory of Walter Kotch, the only police officer in Florence Township who died in the line of duty. The ceremony will be at noon at the Municipal Building. The following day is the Relay for Life at the high school from 11am – 11pm. The community really comes together for the event. It is a nice time to come together for a good cause. Mr. Ulmer passed from cancer. Mayor Wilkie knew him first as his teacher but later he became a friend. He was speaking to another friend about how involved Mr. Ulmer was with the community. He was involved in the canteen and active with the church, the historical society and the senior group. He may have been born and raised in Philadelphia but he made Florence his home. He was proud to speak of the history of the town. Florence lost someone special. He was always at the council meetings. May he rest in peace. The services will be held Sunday.

Waste Management gave the township \$2,000.00. Part of the funds were used for the community garden project. The estimates for the 2017 Road Program were almost \$2 million. The bid came in well under at about \$700,000. He would like to look at a 2017 Road Program B. There were some roads that were put off because of lack of funding. The numbers have been coming in very good and possibly more projects could be bid.

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He said Assistant Administrator Sahol will discuss it further but the township received a \$25,000 grant from Comcast. He is hoping to have programs on Channel 19 such as school plays and other events. He is excited for this opportunity.

Township Administrator

Administrator Brook said the road program will be revisited in June. Planning can begin early.

There was a request from residents to vacate a small street. That will be on the next workshop agenda. It came in today. While he was listening to the others speak, there were two things that crossed his mind. There are some positive attributes to social media, but there are some negative ones also. Marty Eckert, the Recreation Coordinator, read a post on Facebook regarding Nyikita Field. He took it to heart. He went and cleaned up the entire infield by himself. He spent almost the whole day. Public Works is a little overwhelmed right now with all of the cutting and other duties. He wanted to thank Mr. Eckert. He addressed the issue right away and the township appreciates the fact that it got done.

Secondly, there are some things you don't see or hear about. There is a gentleman that was a disabled veteran who was working with Home Depot to put a ramp on his home. There was some confusion with the homeowner and the company that was doing the work. A few days later, the Sub-Code Official, James Hoey, went to Home Depot and met with them and explained exactly what they have to do and took them through the entire process so he could make sure they could do the work before he left for vacation today. You don't see that often. He thanked Mr. Hoey for his efforts and taking the time out of his day to do that. No one asked him to do it but it made life so much easier for the resident who needs the ramp.

Assistant Municipal Administrator

Assistant Administrator Sahol said when Florence Township negotiated the franchise agreement with Comcast, one thing the township was able to secure was a contribution of \$25,000 toward technology. That technology will now be utilized to promote some of the events at the school. There would be a connection from this building into the school and directly to the Comcast network to transmit data. It could also include municipal events such as parades and such for those who may be homebound. The grant will make this possible.

The township has been looking at some of its facilities and their ADA compliance. He recently asked the engineer to review the front and back parking areas at the Municipal Building to see if the standard could be improved for parking and access. The standard would require three spots in the rear lot and two in the front lot. Presently there is one in each lot. It is minor, just line striping and the like. Mayor Wilkie asked if it would be completed by the next election. Assistant Administrator Sahol said it would.

Assistant Administrator Sahol said it was mentioned about social media and people posting concerns or expressing certain things. Often times the township hears things secondary. More often than not the township will read it or someone will mention that they read it.

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The true concern sometimes is not brought to the attention of the township. There is a concern right now about the speed on Front Street and the frequency of certain types of vehicles. It does concern him because he sees the posts but he knows what the officers have been doing. He wanted to mention for the record that the Police Department conducted a speed study. It was determined that the speeds were close enough that there was no reason to recommend a speed change for that roadway at this time. More importantly, the Captain reviewed the records and from January 1 to today there have been two hundred twenty nine traffic stops on Front Street. He doesn't know how many resulted in actual summonses being issued but it shows that there is some good enforcement taking place on Front Street. The speed trailer is there and the clocking trailer has been there a few times. He wanted to say for the record that this is not something that has gone unheard. The township is doing what it has to do and the police officers are responding. They have to cover the entire community but Front Street is not an area that has been ignored by any stretch of the imagination.

Public Comments: Open to the Public

Council President Lovenduski opened the meeting to the public.

Don Kamienski, 10 McCay Drive, thanked the township for having a prescription turn in drive this past Saturday. He was the fourth in line to turn in old drugs. The box was almost full and there was a good turnout. Secondly he wanted to thank whoever changed the calendar in the courtroom to the appropriate month.

Judy King, 35 West Fifth Street, said she noticed that when new streets are named after veterans the names were spelled wrong. She picked up on two, one is Challander Way located across Route 130. Another is Webber Court. Mayor Wilkie asked her to provide the information and the township can look at what the records reflect. He said the township received a list from the veteran's organization many years ago providing the name spellings. These were deceased veterans so their names are not only on the streets, they are on the veteran's monuments. Ms. King agreed but said they are also spelled wrong on some of the monuments. She said the Historical Society has census records. Mayor Wilkie explained that census records may not be accurate. He believes the names were provided to the veteran's groups by the families. She said she knows for a fact that Webber has one "b". Mayor Wilkie asked that she gather the information and reach out to the township administration. He thanked her for bringing it to the township's attention, to his knowledge most of the information came from the veteran's organizations or from historical knowledge that was available.

Ms. King said that Mr. Ulmer was the backbone of the Florence Garden Club.

Kristan Marter, 220 East Front Street, thanked Assistant Administrator Sahol for putting the speed trailer on Front Street. The traffic and the speeding on that street was unbearable during the Dulty's Lane closure. It has subsided some but there are still some dump trucks using Front Street from the Griffin Pipe site. The speeding is still a concern.

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The speed trailer does help some when people see the speed limit and how fast they were going. Her goal in life is to make Front Street known as a speed trap. The more people that are stopped, the more likely that it will happen. She suggested some sort of bypass. She was traveling River Road and noticed a piece of property that used to be a trucking firm. She said it would probably need to be purchased to be used for a bypass. The sale sign is gone and she wondered if it had been sold. She asked if anyone knew, and if it had been sold is it something that would lead to a bypass. She asked if it would need to be purchased by the township or taken for the greater good through eminent domain. It would be better for the entire community to have a bypass there. Mayor Wilkie said the property is located in Burlington Township. Also, it is right next to the turnpike but toward the back it is near the railroad spur. It is expensive to cross a rail spur. That is what shut the idea of a bypass down in years past. It would cost millions of dollars. Ms. Marter said it was her understanding that it was being looked at again. She said she believed it was because of all of the warehouses that are being built in Burlington. She asked if it was still being pursued. Mayor Wilkie said the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, who is doing the study on the traffic, is looking at all options. Ms. Marter asked if any of the options would get the trucks off of Front Street. Traffic leaving Griffin Pipe will be directed to River Road but there is still is traffic from Railroad Avenue and there is going to be an apartment complex that will increase traffic and trucks. She asked if there was a way to make trucks take Cedar Lane. There is congestion at Railroad Avenue. Mayor Wilkie said he believes that will be part of the traffic study will look at every option. Ms. Marter asked if Railroad Avenue was a county road. She was told it is not. She asked if the township could make it a no trucks road.

Council President Lovendusky said Assistant Administrator Sahol had signs installed directing all the trucks to the whirlybird. There are large signs. Assistant Administrator Sahol said the signage is used to dissuade the left turns from the businesses onto Railroad Avenue. It can't be enforced but they are strong recommendations. Railroad Avenue is the one road in the community that was designated as a truck route. The township was required to dedicate one local road as a truck route. If it was restricted there would need to be another road designated as a truck route. Railroad Avenue was selected because there is the most industrial presence there. Ms. Marter asked if there were any roads across Route 130 that could be designated. Assistant Administrator Sahol said they are all county roads. Ms. Marter asked if there was a way to keep the trucks from coming off Route 130 onto Delaware Avenue. The administration said it was a good suggestion. Mayor Wilkie said there is a traffic study being done by the county in conjunction with the DVRPC and all of these things are being taken into consideration. Once the information is made available it will be presented to the public. All of the concerns will be addressed. Ms. Marter said she is glad something is being done and obviously the township monitors the social media because that is where these concerns were raised and the township took action.

Michelle Rosenblum, 19 Buttonwood Drive, said she is asking a question for another resident who could not attend this evening. A comment she had seen on Facebook led her to believe that some people would like to be able to be more engaged and participate more with what is happening in town but cannot attend meetings. She asked about the possibility of live streaming meetings so more people would be able to be involved.

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She thinks it would be relatively inexpensive to do. Administrator Brook said it was a fair request and the township would look into it.

Jennifer Brennan, 700 Olive Street, asked what the status was of the sound study that was discussed at an earlier meeting. Administrator Brook said the study was completed but the results have not been provided yet. As soon as the report is done it will be provided to the public. He explained the process for retrieving the data for a sound study. Ms. Brennan asked how long it would take. Administrator Brook said he hoped the report would be provided in May or June.

Ms. Brennan wanted to let the Mayor and Council that she was traveling on the whirlybird and there was a tractor trailer behind her and it ran her off the road. The truck went to Amazon. She asked if there was a way to get the speed lowered. Mayor Wilkie said the road improvements need to be done before anything can be done about the speed limits.

Ms. Brennan said there was an accident on the whirlybird today. She called the police department and they told her Cedar Lane was closed. Assistant Administrator Sahol said there was an accident on the whirlybird today on the uphill approach heading out of town. The driver maneuvered too close to the guard rail and his tire became wedged beneath the guard rail. It was driver error. Ms. Brennan said she knew about it because trucks had go down Olive Street. Assistant Administrator Sahol said there was an officer posted at Olive Street and Cedar Lane and only one truck went there and it was because he was lost. He missed his turn near Pinnacle and made it down to Olive Street. Ms. Brennan said there were many truck going down Olive Street because of the road closure. Council President Lovendusky said unfortunately if there is a road closure alternate routes need to be used.

Administrator Brook said he agreed when it was said earlier that people have a love/hate relationship with Facebook. He thinks Facebook has a good place in society. Everyone has read things that they know aren't true. There were many comments about a new business, B&H, that is coming to the community. They are Hassidic Jews. They reached out to the township and have met with some of the administration and elected officials. The asked if they should be worried and concerned about some of the posts they were seeing in the community. The response was no. The Mayor and Council President told them that Florence Township is by and large a very tolerant, understanding and caring community with many people who are extremely hard working. But those few individuals who would write things like that, to bring it to a point where a business is concerned about locating here, is where Facebook takes a wrong turn. It is easy to say things and not admit it was wrong. For anyone to judge someone because they are a different culture is wrong. In his opinion that is where Facebook goes off the charts. It completely obliterates tolerance and understanding and the way we should be toward one another.

Mayor Wilkie said he is very appreciative when people respond to those negative posts. It is easy to type and it is totally disrespectful to the community and he is grateful when people try and correct the negative. That is not the reputation of this community. We are a diverse community.

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Administrator Brook said he wanted to add that Facebook comments from the public make the government better, in the end.

It was the Motion of Ostrander, seconded by Sandusky to close the public comments. All ayes.

ADJOURNMENT

8:42 PM MOTION of Sandusky; seconded by Woolston to adjourn. Roll call vote – all ayes. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy L. Erlston
Acting Township Clerk
/aek